

Application No.: 09/484,540

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Docket No.: 325772014200

REMARKS

Claims 1-20 and 26-34 are pending and under consideration.

Claims 1-2, 7-12, 17-20, 26-27 and 31-34 were rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 5,361,147 to Katayama in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,742,410 to Suzuki. This rejection is respectfully traversed.

The Examiner admits that Katayama does not disclose "wherein the image data includes a black component and color components, and the density correcting portion increases at least a density of the black component." The Examiner asserts that Suzuki teaches this feature. The Examiner also asserts that it would have been obvious to use the scheme of Suzuki in the method of Katayama in order to accurately enlarge and blacken the edge area for better color conversion. Applicant respectfully disagrees.

Katayama is directed to a technique for encoding color images without deteriorating image quality. According to Katayama, a black character area is enlarged to *eliminate* the black character area from the color image in order to encode the color image area but not the black character area. Suzuki, on the other hand, is directed to a technique for enhancing reproduction quality of a black character and discloses a process for emphasizing a black character area (edge area). Thus, Katayama teaches a process for eliminating a black character and Suzuki teaches a process for emphasizing a black character. Clearly, these references teach away from each other and one of ordinary skill in the art would not have been motivated to combine the references as suggested by the Examiner. Therefore, Applicant requests that this rejection be withdrawn.

Claims 4-6, 14-16 and 28-30 were rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over Katayama and Suzuki in view of Tamura. In light of the foregoing remarks, this rejection is respectfully traversed. One of ordinary skill in the art would not have been motivated to combine the teaches of Katayama and Suzuki. Applicant requests that this rejection be withdrawn.

Claims 3, 13 and 27 were rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over Katayama and Suzuki in view of Hirata. In light of the foregoing remarks, this rejection is

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respectfully traversed. One of ordinary skill in the art would not have been motivated to combine the teaches of Katayama and Suzuki. Applicant requests that this rejection be withdrawn.

In view of the above, each of the presently pending claims in this application is believed to be in immediate condition for allowance. Accordingly, the Examiner is respectfully requested to withdraw the outstanding rejection of the claims and to pass this application to issue.

In the event that the transmittal letter is separated from this document and the Patent Office determines that an extension and/or other relief is required, Applicant(s) petition(s) for any required relief including extensions of time and authorizes the Commissioner to charge the cost of such petitions and/or fees due in connection with this document to Deposit Account No. 03-1952 referencing docket no. 325772014200.

Dated: October 21, 2003

Respectfully submitted,

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